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Department of State

TELEGRAM

SECRET

CONTROL: 9435Q
 RECD: MAR 28, 1973
 1724Z

R 281549Z MAR 73 ZFF-4
 FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8733
 BT
 S E C R E T PARIS 8698

Rec'd in OpsCenter 1215, 2 Apr
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 and Chief/OCI/EUR/ [] courtesy of
 the White House Situation Room.

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NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
 TAGS: PGOV, FR
 SUBJECT: PRESIDENT POMPIDOU'S HEALTH

REF: STATE 55524

SDO
 Operations Center

1. IN REGARD TO PARAGRAPH TWO, REFTEL, I HAVE HEARD A NUMBER OF RUMORS, IN THE SHORT TIME THAT I HAVE BEEN HERE, ABOUT PRESIDENT POMPIDOU'S HEALTH. THESE RUMORS STARTED SHORTLY AFTER THE FIRST OF THE YEAR WHEN THE PRESIDENT MADE A NUMBER OF PUBLIC AND TELEVISION APPEARANCES IN WHICH HE SEEMED TO BE OVERWEIGHT, PALE AND PUFFY AROUND THE JOWLS.
2. AN EMBASSY OFFICER WAS RECENTLY TOLD BY AN ELYSEE SOURCE CLOSE TO THE PRESIDENT THAT POMPIDOU HAS BEEN SUFFERING FROM RHEUMATISM AND HAS UNDERGONE CORTISONE TREATMENTS. THE SOURCE ADDED THAT THE PRESIDENT IS MUCH BETTER NOW AND HAS STOPPED THE CORTISONE TREATMENTS. THIS IS ALSO THE ONLY HARD INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY WHICH MIGHT HAVE PROVIDED THE BASIS OF SIR ALEC DOUGLAS-HUME'S REMARKS, INSOFAR AS THEY WERE BASED ON INFORMATION FROM THE BRITISH EMBASSY HERE.
3. WE, THE BRITISH, AND OTHERS HAVE HEARD MORE EXTRAVAGANT RUMORS THAT THE PRESIDENT IS SUFFERING FROM CANCER OR FROM ANOTHER UNNAMED BUT TERMINAL DISEASE. IF YOU HAVE OPPORTUNITY, SUGGEST YOU TALK ABOUT THIS WITH GENERAL WALTERS. WHILE I HAVE NO BASIS OF COMPARISON, PRESIDENT POMPIDOU APPEARED IN GOOD HEALTH AND SPIRITS AND SPOKE VIGOROUSLY WHEN I PRESENTED MY CREDENTIALS ON MARCH 23.
4. PLEASE PASS TO LONDON IF DESIRED.

IRWIN

State Department review completed

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